

# News Release

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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## City Council OKs green initiatives

**RIVERSIDE, Calif.** – The City of Arts and Innovation has ventured once more into the green zone, passing several initiatives last night that drew the praise of the California Department of Conservation.

“Riverside is greener than green; it’s emerald,” said Bridgett Luther, the director of the department.

The director was in Riverside yesterday to urge the city council to accept the updated local Green Action Plan, which was revised to accommodate the city’s designation as an Emerald City. Riverside was the first city in California chosen as an Emerald City, a state pilot program to help municipal governments become greener through “hands-on” technical and financial assistance. As a result of this unique partnership, 2007 city green goals were expanded to be even more ambitious. For instance, Riverside is striving to install 20 megawatts of photovoltaic installations within the city; reduce citywide waste by 75 percent per capita; and reduce water usage by 20 percent. All by 2020.



**Mayor Ron Loveridge and California Department of Conservation Director Bridgett Luther.**

“We wanted to stretch it to the limit,” she said. “We didn’t want easy. We wanted to push the envelope.”

However, she noted that goals are not mandates. The results will help determine if such ambitious aims can be attained with aid from Sacramento.

The city also pitched in a new logo for the state project, designed by Serena Eddlemon of Riverside Public Utilities.

The council’s accepted the updates on the city’s plan Tuesday night, but didn’t stop there. It also approved two other items: Granting \$100,000 to the University of California, Riverside, for the establishment of a solar research project; and subsidizing

Riverside Transit Agency bus passes to sell at discount prices to Riverside residents to promote public transportation.

Local alternative-energy property owners had much to cheer about as well. The council voted to approve the new Energy High Efficiency Loan Program (E-HELP), which offers loans to property owners for renewable-energy and energy-saving improvements. The loans can then be paid off as a special assessment on their property tax. Borrowers have up to 20 years to pay off the loan.

“The exciting reports and important actions taken at Tuesday’s City Council meeting indicate that our goals for a green Riverside are coming to fruition, and rapidly so,” said Mayor Ron Loveridge. “We are making good things happen in public transit, solar energy, energy efficiency and a whole host of other green initiatives.”

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Established in 1895, Riverside Public Utilities is a consumer-owned water and electric utility governed by a board of nine community volunteers that provides high quality, reliable services to over 107,000 metered electric customers and 63,400 metered water customers throughout the City of Riverside. The Utility is committed to increased use of renewable energy resources and sustainable living practices that help reduce environmental impacts within the City of Riverside and the state of California.

[www.RiversidePublicUtilities.com](http://www.RiversidePublicUtilities.com)

[www.GreenRiverside.com](http://www.GreenRiverside.com)

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